

Maine salmon may be facing extinction

January 31 2006

Maine salmon might be facing extinction despite a \$20 million, five-year rescue effort and inclusion on the federal government's list of endangered species.

The recovery program has focused on restocking Maine's rivers with native salmon bred in a hatchery, but few fish have returned to spawn, the Boston Globe reported Tuesday. About 80 returning adult salmon have been found in the eight rivers where their population is endangered.

"These rivers are in trauma mode, the IV is in," Joseph Zydlewski, research scientist with the Maine Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit for the US Geological Survey, told the Globe.

Zydlewski and other scientists are urging more aggressive action to save native salmon, while other environmentalists say a plan is needed to deal with declining fish species ecosystem-wide and not just a single species.

Maine's rivers once teemed with so many salmon that one was ceremoniously delivered to the president each year. But water pollution, acid rain, dams, overfishing, habitat loss and possibly unidentified factors have slashed their numbers during the last century.

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Citation: Maine salmon may be facing extinction (2006, January 31) retrieved 1 May 2024 from

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